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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 29 | Min 21 | Humidity 70% Generally cloudy sky with Light rain Sensex 83,467 | Nifty 25,585 | Gold 1,29,440 | Silver 1,94,000 | Dollar 87.82 | Euro 102.11 | GBP 117.87

Survey reveals Shakti scheme has helped over 80% respondents save up to Rs 500 per week; 12% admit they had never used a bus before; in Bengaluru, 34% reported new or better jobs

WOMEN ON A ROLL

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A report capturing the key insights of all five guarantee schemes introduced by the Karnataka government has revealed that of these, the Shakti scheme has managed to touch the lives of 90% of lower-income group women, with over 80% saving up to Rs 500 per week.

The survey was led by Tara Krishnaswamy, Independent Policy Consultant and field data was collected by Lokniti-CSDS, Bangalore University & Tumkur University and Indus Action. Data was collected from women from low-income households for Anna Bhagya, Gruha Lakshmi, Gruha Jyoti, Shakti and Yuva Nidhi schemes. The report also captures Bengaluru urban and rural specific impact.

The field study across all divisions of Karnataka, reveals

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

> **Women from low-income backgrounds not only attest to increased agency for mobility, it has enabled significant increase in access to healthcare and employment** — Tara Krishnaswamy, lead researcher

GOLDEN GETAWAY

Bengaluru airport ranks sixth in India for gold seizures

CITY PAGE 2

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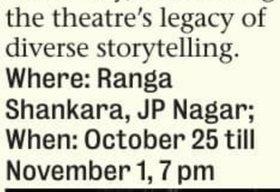
THINGS TO DO

01 Fiction frontier



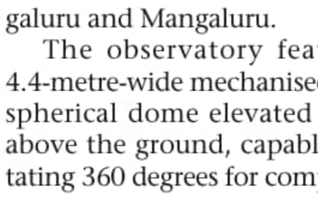
Join Gautam Bhatia and guests for a discussion on Between Worlds, an anthology showcasing bold Indian SFF voices exploring AI, climate, love, and rebellion. **Where: Champaca, Vasanth Nagar; When: October 19, 6 pm onwards**

02 Sustainable sound

India's greenest circular music festival is running a city-wide E-Waste Collection Drive. Donate small IT, electronics, and electrical items to earn festival passes and see your waste transformed into art installations. Collection Points: Social outlets at Hebbal, Church Street, Koramangala, Indiranagar. **Collection points: Social outlets at Hebbal, Church Street, Koramangala, Indiranagar; When: October 18 to November 2**

03 Dramatic flair

Celebrating 21 years, Ranga Shankara hosts its annual Theatre Festival, featuring Hindi, English, Punjabi, and Kannada productions. Audiences can catch five fresh plays never seen before in the city, continuing the theatre's legacy of diverse storytelling. **Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar; When: October 25 till November 1, 7 pm**



04 Folk fabric

Celebrate India's handloom and craft heritage at The Grand Rajasthani Exhibition. Explore Bandhani fabrics, handlooms, jewellery, paintings, carpets, and more by master artisans. **Where: Sri Someshwara Sabha Bhavana, JP Nagar; When: until October 22, 10:30 am to 8 pm**

05 International outlook

Nobel laureates David MacMillan and James Robinson join experts Tolullah Oni, Gagandeep Kang, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, and Kush Parmar to discuss sustainable and equitable futures, with talks on science, health, and prosperity, plus performances by Dr L Subramaniam and Kavita Krishnamurthy. **Where: JN Tata Auditorium, Indian Institute of Science, Malleshwaram; When: November 3, 10:30 am to 1 pm**

High-tech airport customs fails to stop gold smuggling

Latest customs data reveals massive gold hauls, placing Bengaluru sixth nationwide as Kerala airports dominate India's expanding smuggling network

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Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) has emerged as the sixth busiest airport in India in terms of gold seizures, according to the latest data released by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC). While the airport has witnessed sharp growth in smuggling cases over the past two years, recent trends show a marginal decline. Other airports in Karnataka — Mangalore and Kannur — feature much lower on the national list, underlining Bengaluru's prominence as a smuggling hotspot.

Airport under scrutiny as customs intercept rising gold smuggling cases

Bengaluru's surge in seizures

According to Rajya Sabha data, in 2021–22, gold weighing 105.6 kg was seized at Bengaluru Airport. This rose to 192.49 kg in 2022–23, reflecting a massive 82% year-on-year increase. However, in 2023–24, seizures dipped to 174.91 kg, a 9% decrease from the previous year. Despite the slight fall, the overall three-year data indicates that gold smuggling activity through Bengaluru has grown significantly — nearly 65% higher in 2023–24 compared to 2021–22.

Customs officials attribute the surge to the rising number of international flights, particularly from Gulf nations, which continue to be the primary source of smuggled gold into southern India. Concealment methods have also become more sophisticated, ranging from electronic devices and baggage linings to food packets and clothing.

Apart from Bengaluru, two other international airports feature in the national list of gold seizures — Mangalore International Airport and Kannur Airport (though Kannur serves Kerala officially, its proximity to the Karnataka border gives it significance for smugglers targeting both states). Mangaluru recorded 30.57 kg of seized gold in 2023–24, ranking far lower nationally compared with Bengaluru. Kannur, on the other hand, accounted for 62.66 kg, placing it above Mangaluru but still well below Bengaluru's numbers. The relatively smaller volumes at these airports are linked to fewer international arrivals than at Bengaluru.

At the all-India level, Bengaluru ranks sixth in gold seizures. The top five airports ahead of it are Mumbai (1,091.3 kg), Delhi (474.21 kg), Chennai (409.24 kg), Calicut (303.57 kg), and Cochin (195.97 kg). Bengaluru's figure of 174.91 kg places it just below Cochin but comfortably ahead of other southern airports such as Kannur, Trichy (54.38 kg), and Mangalore. This ranking cements Bengaluru's status as one of the leading gateways for smuggled gold into India, reflecting both its increasing international connectivity and the vigilance of customs authorities.

An interesting observation from the national data is the dominance of Kerala's airports. Calicut, Cochin, and Kannur all feature prominently on the list,

Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport has become one of India's busiest hubs for gold seizures, with nearly 175 kg intercepted last year

with Calicut ranking fourth nationwide with 303.57 kg seized in 2023–24. The Gulf–Kerala corridor has long been a smuggling route due to the high volume of expatriate traffic, and its proximity to Karnataka often has spillover effects, especially for airports such as Mangaluru and Bengaluru.

Enforcement measures

Experts said the government has been stepping up enforcement through multiple initiatives. At Bengaluru, customs authorities have installed advanced scanning technologies and increased coordination with airline operators. Intelligence-based targeting of passengers has led to the interception of several high-profile smuggling attempts.

IISc's ₹80-lakh hub brings stars closer to students

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has begun constructing a state-of-the-art astronomical observatory at its Kudapura campus near Chitradurga to promote deeper research and observation in astronomy. The facility, being developed at a cost of around ₹80 lakh, is expected to be ready for use within the next two months. Until now, astronomy research and sky observation facilities have been limited to Bengaluru and Mangaluru.

The observatory features a 4.4-metre-wide mechanised hemispherical dome elevated 30 feet above the ground, capable of rotating 360 degrees for comprehensive sky tracking. Funded through the CSR initiative of VFS Global, the centre will conduct three- and seven-day astronomy training sessions for students from PUC, BSc, and MSc courses, with a special focus on encouraging female participation. The next-generation telescope installed here will enable observation and photography of the Sun, Moon, eclipses, planets, and galaxies, allowing nearly 1,000–1,500 participants to engage in viewing and research at a time. International bidding is already underway for the procurement of advanced telescopes and related equipment.

"The observatory will be operational within the next couple of months and will serve as a valuable learning hub for teachers and students alike," said Dr B Subbareddy, Chief Research Scientist, IISc. **— BMB**

Two crore youths seek representation

Various youth organisations are demanding the immediate establishment of a State Youth Commission to address the growing challenges faced by young people. While separate commissions exist for children, women, and other sections of society, activists point out that nearly two crore young people in the state lack a dedicated body to represent their issues. Young people today are grappling with multiple pressures — from education, employment, health, and relationships to social and emotional well-being. Many also face discrimination, workplace harassment, financial hardship, and even domestic abuse, underscoring the need for a specialised commission to protect their rights and promote empowerment.

Activists have urged the government to prioritise the formation of the Youth Commission during the upcoming winter legislative session, reminding it of the promise made during the 2023 elections. Several youth organisations have already submitted memoranda through district administrations and local MLAs. "Young people in Karnataka face issues in education, employment, and health. A Youth Commission is essential to empower them and address these challenges effectively. The government must act soon," said Janardhan Kesargadde, Director of Samvada Trust. The proposed commission would study youth-related problems, offer policy recommendations, and monitor empowerment programmes across the state. **— BMB**

Mobile-free talent drive launched in hostels

Concerned about the growing mobile phone addiction among children, the Department of Kannada and Culture has launched a unique initiative to wean them off screens and nurture their hidden talents through art training. The six-month programme, introduced under the SCSP and TSP (Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Sub-Plan) schemes, is being implemented across Karnataka for students residing in government hostels. Each batch includes 25 students from SC hostels and 20 from ST hostels, who receive art training three days a week for two hours each under skilled art mentors. The training, already underway in Mysuru and other districts, covers Hindustani and classical music, light music, folk singing, theatre, and dance. nitially planned for 25 students, the response from parents and children has now surged to over 100 students per centre. **— BMB**

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Vengaiah Lake's revival washed away by sewage

Drain clean-up turns murky as lack of coordination between lakes and stormwater drain depts spills over into newly rejuvenated lake

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Residents of KR Puram, Thambu Chetty Palya, and nearby areas were delighted when the then Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) authorities began the long-delayed rejuvenation of Vengaiah Lake. The water body, choked with sewage and silt for years, was taken up for restoration in March 2024 at an estimated cost of ₹4 crore. The rejuvenation was completed recently, raising hopes that the lake would regain its lost glory. However, the joy of residents and lake activists was short-lived when sewage and dirty water began entering the lake on Wednesday.

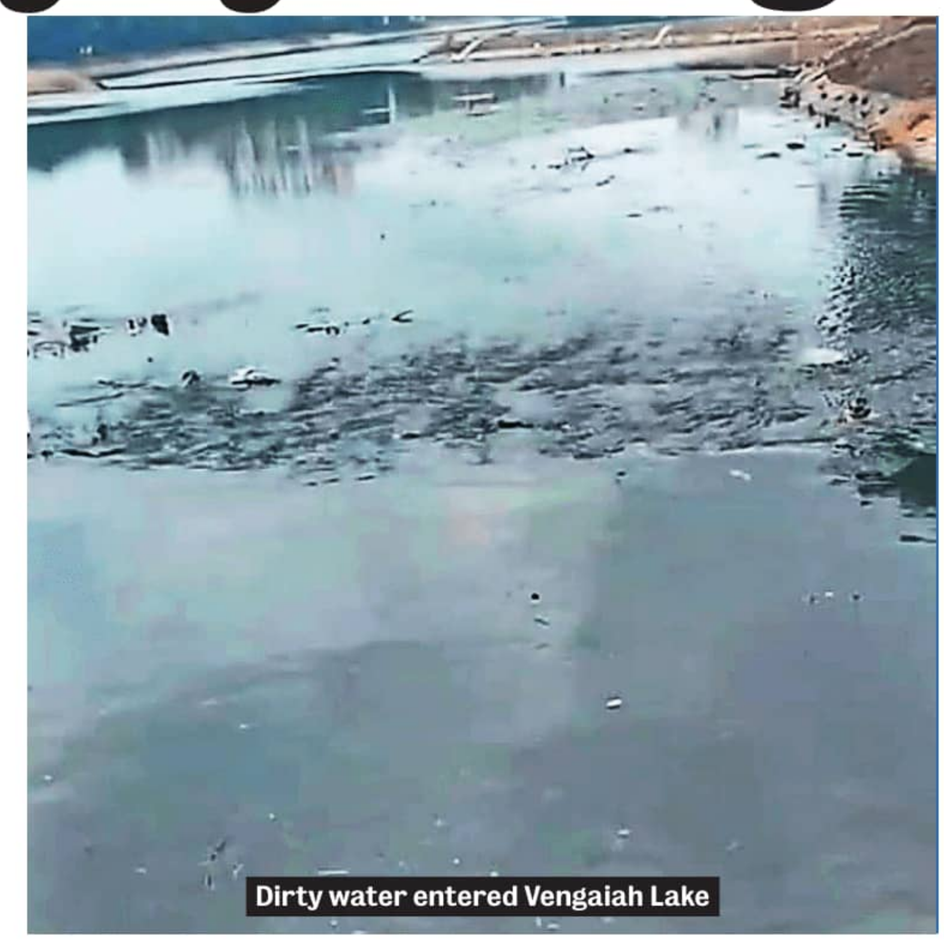
Residents and activists were shocked to see untreated water flowing into the lake after the stormwater drain department of the nearby sewage treatment plant (STP) allegedly used an earthmover to clear a drain clogged with sewage and silt. They alleged the sudden interest in cleaning was mainly to showcase to Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, scheduled to visit the area soon, that all was well and under control.

"I was shocked and aghast to see dirty water in the lake. The government has established the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) to ensure coordination among departments. If there is no coordination between the lakes department and the stormwater drain department, what is the use of the GBA? I have already complained to the lakes department and want the authorities to act immediately to stop dirty water from entering the lake," said Balaji Raghotham, a lake activist.

Demanding that the Bengaluru East City Corporation (BECC) maintain Vengaiah Lake properly, Devaraju R, a resident of TC Palya, said he was appalled to see an earthmover facilitating the entry of dirty water into the rejuvenated lake. "It is disgusting to see the lake's condition back to square one. What is the use of spending taxpayers' money if the lakes department cannot prevent dirty water from entering it?" he asked.

Another resident, speaking on condition of anonymity, blamed the authorities, especially those in charge of the STP, for negligence. "How will they drain dirty water from the lake? It is not good to have polluted water remain there. The authorities will now need funds again to remove it," the resident said. Meanwhile, BECC Assistant Executive Engineer (Lakes) Rashmi said she had already alerted the STP management about the issue. "I directed the STP management not to let dirty water into the stormwater drain. I have also informed the Commissioner, who has decided to convene a meeting shortly. The objective is to stop sewage from entering the drains. The issue will be fixed in a few days," she said.

Despite the assurance, residents and lake activists remain unconvinced, citing past instances of similar negligence. Their larger question lingers — will the authorities finally pull up their socks and protect Bengaluru's precious lakes?


Dirty water entered Vengaiah Lake

"What is the use of spending tax-payers' money to rejuvenate the lake if the lakes department is not able to stop dirty water from entering the lake?
– Devaraju R, resident of TC Palya

B-SMILE ensures Twin Tunnel Road DPR transparency

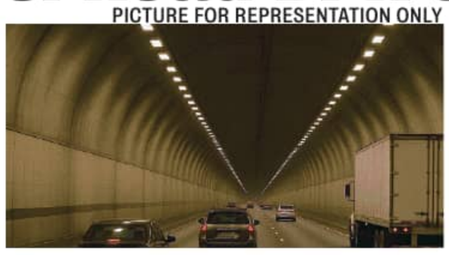
Twin Tunnel Road project moves forward after expert committee review, confirming adherence to technical standards, environmental protocols, and transparency in tendering

Following a report by Bangalore Mirror highlighting the government-appointed expert committee's review of the proposed Twin Tunnel Road project, Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (B-SMILE) has reiterated that the project complies with regulations and standards. The expert committee has accepted the Detailed Project Report (DPR), paving the way for the tendering process.

"The review and compliance were done extensively over 1.5 months with a series of meetings, explanations, and finally, after compliance, the committee accepted the DPR, which further moved to the tendering process," B-SMILE clarified. The expert committee, while reviewing the proposal earlier, had pointed out several flaws in the DPR and conveyed its observations to the Urban Development Department.

Addressing the concerns, B-SMILE stated that a total of 18 boreholes were drilled for geotechnical testing, in line with IS 17883:2022, which recommends at least one drill hole per kilometre, irrespective of depth, based on geological considerations. In addition to the primary investigation, verified secondary data from nearby BMRCL projects were also integrated into the Geotechnical Interpretative Report (GIR). According to the agency, the geological findings from these sources corroborated the borehole data from the tunnel project, and further validation of the subsurface model was carried out through geophysical investigations. A Seismic Refraction Test (SRT) was also undertaken to determine the depth, thickness, and velocity of the subsurface layers. Groundwater levels were identified from borehole data and cross-checked with BMRCL records to ensure accuracy.

PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY


18 boreholes drilled for geotechnical testing as per IS 17883:2022, ensuring one drill hole per kilometre for geological assessment

B-SMILE further clarified that a site-specific Environmental Management Plan would be prepared and implemented during the construction phase, following the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) guidelines.

As per the official communication, the shaft location proposed within Lalbagh Botanical Garden has been carefully planned to cause minimal environmental impact. The planning considers the sensitivity of the site and aligns with other major infrastructure works currently underway in Bengaluru, such as metro construction.

A portion of the Lalbagh land will be temporarily used for construction-related activities. Once the works are completed, B-SMILE stated, the land will be fully restored and handed back to the concerned authority. However, a small portion will be permanently acquired for project use. The agency clarified that Lalbagh Botanical Garden is not listed as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) under notifications issued by the MoEF&CC, Government of India.

Addressing concerns over project costs, B-SMILE said that operation and maintenance expenses were deliberately excluded from the engineering cost estimate and were instead accounted for during the financial modelling and viability assessment, based on the selected Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) implementation model.

"The formation of the committee and the review of the DPR itself is an example of due diligence and transparency by the authority. The tender was called only after review and full compliance," B-SMILE stated.

— BMB

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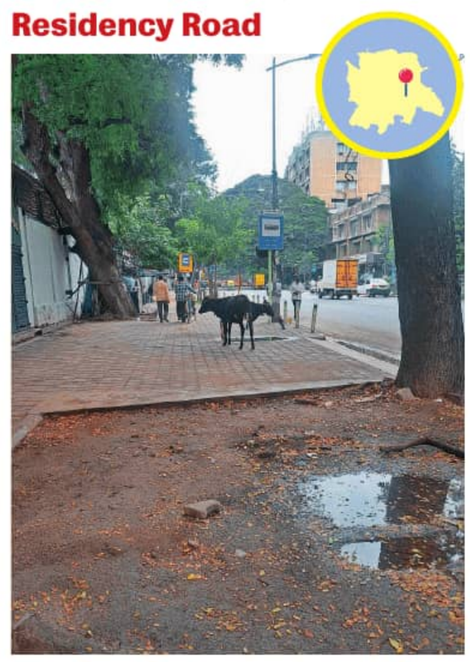
Abandoned vehicle
Frazer Town

An abandoned vehicle has remained near a park in Frazer Town for several weeks, despite police presence and repeated complaints from residents.

Road danger
Electronic City

A 3 km stretch from Singena Agrahara Market to Chandapura is filled with deep craters, posing danger to 5,000–6,000 students and staff, despite five years of ignored complaints.

Cattle blockage
Residency Road


Cows are obstructing Residency Road near a kindergarten, causing inconvenience to commuters and pedestrians.

PAGE 10

Women-led gang arrested for running fake loan scam in B'luru

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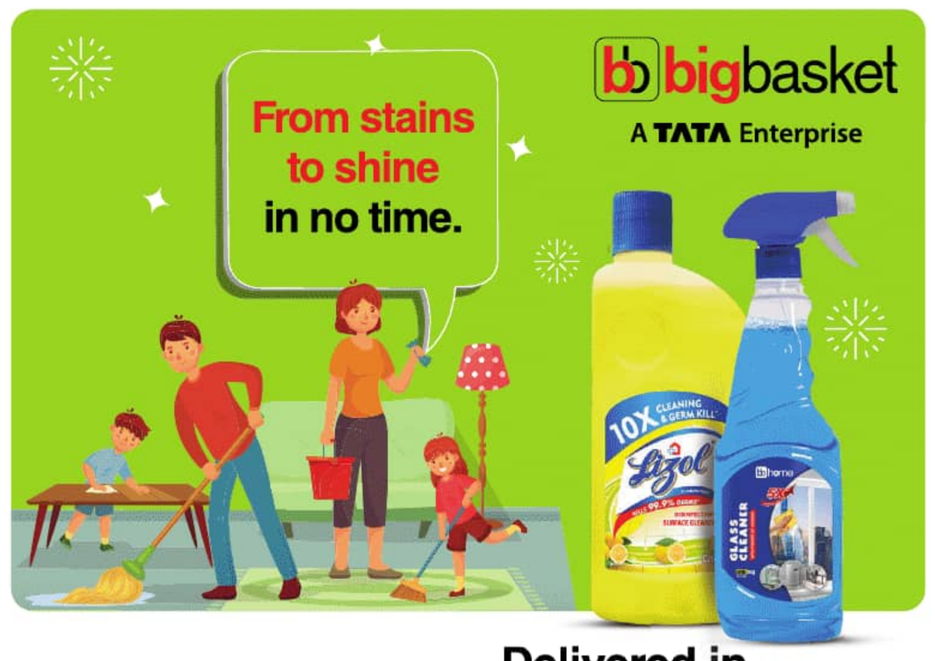

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PENTAGON 13116

Threats to Priyank Kharge: Accused nabbed in Solapur, brought to B'luru

The Sadashivanagar police on Thursday have arrested a sales executive for making abusive and threatening calls to IT-BT Minister Priyank Kharge, following his remarks on banning RSS activities in government institutions.

The accused, identified as Dhanappa (40) worked for an FMCG company, was traced to his hometown in Solapur, Maharashtra, through call record analysis and brought to Bengaluru for questioning.

Authorities said the probe aims to determine the motive behind the calls and how the accused obtained the minister's contact number. Police are also investigating whether others were involved in the threats. The case came to public attention after Kharge shared a video on social media in which the caller hurled abuses and issued threats.

The threats followed Kharge's letter to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, urging a ban on RSS activities in schools, colleges, and other public institutions, a move that drew sharp criticism from many. **–BMB**

GBA prepares ward-level action plan to cut emission

The Climate Action Cell will create ward-level plans across five city corporations, prioritising mitigation, resilience, and low-emission strategies to drive Bengaluru's 2030 net-zero goal efficiently

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Greater Bengaluru Authority's Climate Action Cell (CAC) is chalking out strategies to come up with a ward-level climate action plan for Bengaluru.

Under the plan, 10 wards across the five city corporations will be selected, and an individual ward climate action plan (WCAP) will be prepared for each. These reports will provide a detailed picture of the current environmental conditions, key challenges, possible interventions, and a prioritised list of actions to ensure effective implementation.

The CAC is in the process of identifying a working group that will play a central role in driving the project. According to the proceedings of the CAC's recent stakeholder meeting, the working group will provide technical and sectoral expertise — including analytical tools, local stakeholder engagement, and knowledge-partner support. It will also oversee the preparation of WCAP reports, curate the report framework, and ensure quality delivery for all 10 shortlisted wards by January 2026.

The working group will guide and collaborate closely with CAC fellows, review progress periodically, and report back to the Climate Action Cell to ensure transparency and accountability. A structural matrix has also been proposed to align ward-level actions, define responsibilities, and set up clear monitoring mechanisms.

File photo of a discussion organised by environmentalists, citizens and activists on climate change, in the city

Greater Bengaluru Authority's Climate Action Cell is developing ward-level climate action plans to identify key challenges, prioritise mitigation steps, and ensure Bengaluru meets its C40 commitment of achieving net-zero emissions

The Climate Action Cell was launched in 2023 under the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) Bengaluru Climate Action and Resilience Plan (BCAP). The initiative aims to help the city achieve net-zero emissions as part of its commitment to the C40 Cities network. Since its inception, BCAP, in partnership with WRI India, has been developing strategies to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions and build more resilient communities.

City-based environmentalists have welcomed the move but emphasised the need for sharper focus on high-impact actions. "Implementation of the BMLTA Act, creating bus priority lanes as prescribed in the Comprehensive Mobility Plan, developing low-emission zones, and mapping Bengaluru's blue-green cover are big-ticket initiatives that can significantly boost the city's climate resilience," said Dattatreya Devare, trustee of the Bangalore Environment Trust.

He added that while ward-level action plans are a step in the right direction, CAC must prioritise these critical measures with clear timelines and measurable targets.

Govt seeks feedback on draft domestic workers' rights bill

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The Karnataka government has released the draft of the Karnataka Domestic Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2025, and is inviting public feedback. The Bill seeks to overhaul protections for domestic workers by prescribing working conditions, welfare contributions, registration, and penalties for non-compliance.

One of the Bill's central provisions mandates that "no domestic worker shall be employed without an agreement in writing entered into between the employer and the worker." This agreement, based on a model to be prescribed later, must include details such as the worker's name, nature of work, hours, wages, benefits, and welfare contributions.

The draft proposes that working hours should not exceed 48 hours a week, with either one full day off or two half-day breaks. It entitles domestic workers to reasonable working hours, rest periods, annual paid leave, and maternity benefits. The government will have the power to fix and revise minimum wages periodically, ensuring parity across gender and age groups.

To institutionalise welfare, the Bill introduces the "Domestic Workers Social Security and Welfare Fund," financed through registration fees, fines, government grants, and up to 5% of welfare fees from employers, service providers, and placement agencies. Oversight will rest with the Karnataka State Domestic Workers Social Security and Welfare Board, comprising representatives of domestic workers, employers, service providers, and government officials. The Board will administer the fund, advise the government, and frame welfare schemes.

For enforcement, the Bill proposes stringent penalties. Employing unregistered domestic workers or failing to renew registration may attract up to three months' imprisonment and fines up to 20,000. Serious offences — such as abuse, confinement, or employing children — could result in jail terms between three and seven years and fines up to 50,000.

Worker unions welcome reform but seek clarity on fund sharing and the practical challenges of enforcing laws inside private homes

According to the draft notification, the law aims to "provide for the right to decent conditions of work, social security and welfare of domestic workers in Karnataka." Officials argue the Bill addresses a long-standing gap, bringing informal household work under formal labour protections.

Worker unions and civil society groups have largely welcomed the move but have sought clarity on sharing the welfare fund's financial burden. They have also flagged practical challenges in enforcing compliance in private homes. Meanwhile, employer associations warn that written contracts and digital registration could be cumbersome for smaller households.

Karnataka Domestic Workers Bill, 2025, proposes written agreements, capped work hours, minimum wages, social security fund, and strict penalties

The draft was published on October 15, and citizens have 30 days to submit suggestions. After consultations, the government will finalise the Bill before presenting it in the legislature. If enacted, it will mark a major step toward formal recognition of domestic work and the extension of legal and social protections to thousands of women workers across Karnataka.

State launches drive to save native seeds

Efforts to conserve and promote disappearing native agricultural crops have gained momentum across Karnataka, with over 2,000 indigenous varieties already collected and documented. The Agriculture Department has identified and preserved around 20,000 strains from 20 major crops, while research is underway on nearly 1,800 varieties. Officials said the initiative aims to conserve, promote, and expand the cultivation of traditional crops by identifying farmers who have preserved them, protecting the varieties, storing them in seed banks, and encouraging the use of nutrient-rich native seeds in both rural and urban areas. Agriculture and horticulture research centres across the state have joined hands in this extensive documentation process, with experts analysing crop quality and performance. Farmers who have preserved unique local varieties are encouraged to register at the nearest Farmers' Contact Centre to benefit from the scheme. **–BMB**

Pass marks for SSLC, PU now 33%

In a move aimed at improving pass percentages, the Karnataka government has reduced the minimum passing marks for SSLC and II PUC students from 35% to 33%, effective from the current academic year. A government order issued on Wednesday said the decision, supported by the public, aligns the state's evaluation system with CBSE and neighbouring state boards. School Education and Literacy Minister Madhu Bangarappa said SSLC students must now score 206 out of 625 and II PUC students 198 out of 600 to pass, with at least 30 marks per subject and an overall average of 33%. The revised rule applies to all students, including repeaters, from the March–April 2026 board exams. **–BMB**

Govt plans four Namo Bharat corridors

The Karnataka government has urged the Centre to conduct a detailed feasibility study for four Namo Bharat semi high-speed rail corridors linking Bengaluru with nearby cities and border towns. The proposal, sent to the National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC), aims to boost regional connectivity and economic ties with Tamil Nadu. The proposed routes include Bengaluru–Hoskote–Kolar (65 km), Bengaluru–Mysuru (145 km), Bengaluru–Tumakuru (60 km), and Bengaluru–Hosur–Krishnagiri–Dharmapuri (138 km).

Namo Bharat trains, India's next-generation semi high-speed service, can reach speeds of up to 180 kmph and offer metro-style comfort with CCTV, air-conditioning, anti-collision systems, automatic doors, fire safety, and mobile charging points, accommodating 100 seated and 200 standing passengers in a fully electric, modern setup. **-BMB**

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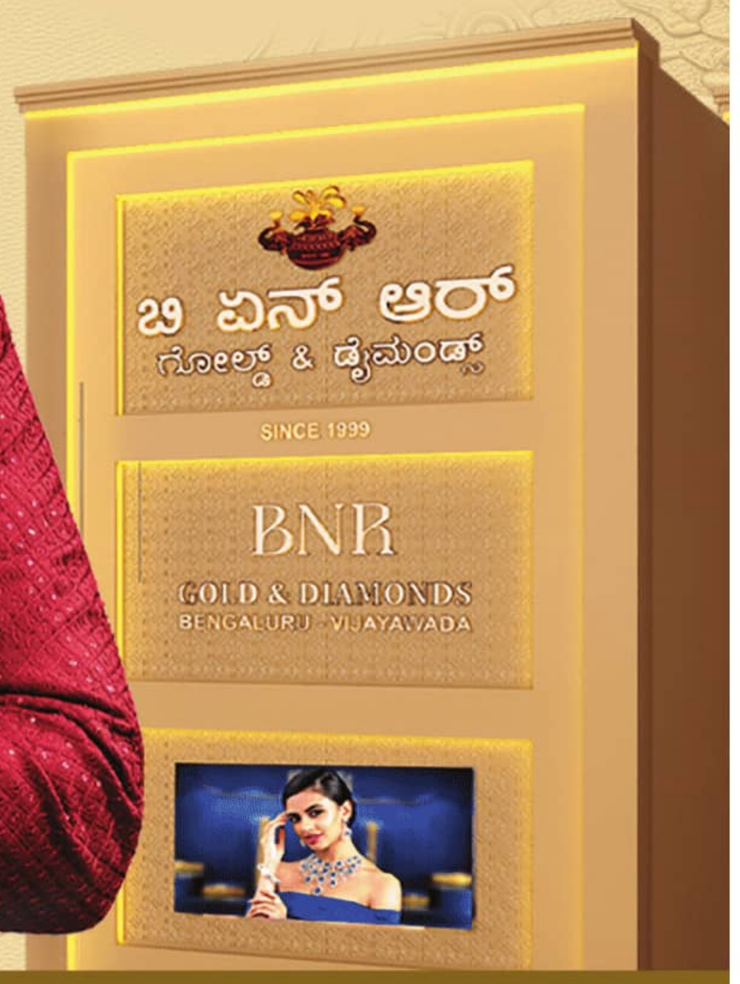

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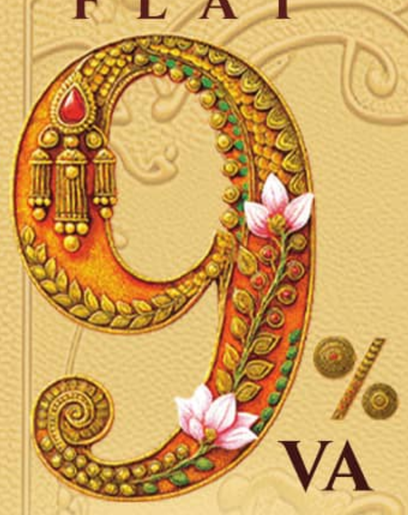

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City roads to get ₹2,200-crore facelift

The state government has directed the Chief Commissioner of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) to prepare and submit a comprehensive ₹2,200 crore action plan for the development and asphalting of major, sub-major, and ward-level roads across the city.

The directive followed a review meeting chaired by the Chief Minister, where ministers and MLAs raised concerns about the poor condition of Bengaluru's arterial and ward roads and the urgent need for improved drainage and maintenance.

Of the total proposed amount, ₹1,100 crore will be allocated for the development of major and sub-major roads under the Special Infrastructure Capital Support Scheme, while another ₹1,100 crore will be used for asphalting ward roads under the Chief Minister's Discretionary Fund.

The GBA has been instructed to collect and consolidate data from five municipal zones, follow PWD schedule rates, and adhere to the Urban Roads Manual while preparing detailed estimates. **–BMB**

Long wait ahead for Pink Line commuters

The long-delayed Pink Line of Namma Metro, connecting Kalena Agrahara and Nagawara, has once again missed its completion deadline. Originally scheduled for operation in December 2024, the elevated section is now expected to open only by May 2026, instead of March as earlier planned. Officials of the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) cited ongoing construction and other delays for the extension, disappointing regular metro commuters. The city's other lines have faced similar setbacks — the Yellow Line to Electronic City was delayed by two and a half years, while the Green Line extension took nearly five years beyond schedule.

The 21-km Pink Line includes a 7.5-km elevated section between Kalena Agrahara and Tavarekere (Swagath Cross Road) and a 13.76-km underground stretch from Dairy Circle to Nagawara. The elevated corridor comprises six stations — Kalena Agrahara, Hulimavu, IIM-Bangalore, JP Nagar 4th Phase, Jayadeva, and Tavarekere. The underground section, expected to be Bengaluru's longest metro tunnel, is planned to open by December 2026, though officials admit further delays are possible.

The Pink Line will have key interchanges with other metro corridors — Jayadeva (Yellow Line), MG Road (Purple Line), Dairy Circle (Red Line), Nagawara (Blue Line), and JP Nagar 4th Phase (Orange Line). For operations, four train sets will be required, to be supplied by BEML, which is manufacturing 318 metro coaches under an agreement with BMRCL. Of these, 96 coaches (16 trains) are earmarked for the Pink Line. After trial runs and mandatory approvals, the 7-km elevated stretch is expected to open to the public by May 2026, according to BMRCL officials. **–BMB**

Karnataka records 6,013 elephants in DNA census

DNA-based elephant census by Wildlife Institute of India sets new baseline for population monitoring, confirms Karnataka's status as top elephant state

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
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India's first nationwide DNA-based elephant census has placed the elephant population in Karnataka at 6,013, nearly 10 percent less when compared with the census conducted by the Karnataka Forest Department in 2023.

KFD's process of elephant population estimation was based on dung count, and the estimated population of elephants was 6,395.

The new census conducted by the Wildlife Institute of India underlines that the outcomes of the synchronised 2023 estimation by the Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala Forest Departments find corroboration in the DNA-based census, indicating promise for large-scale deployment. The outcome of this assessment, however, is not directly comparable with earlier estimates and should be treated as a new baseline for future monitoring, research, and estimation.

The WII census outcome highlights that while Karnataka harbours the highest number of wild elephants in India, it is also one of the major hotspots for human-elephant conflict. This is due to the vast expanse of crop fields and plantations, and human settlements inside as well as outside the ecological range of the elephant.

Apart from human-elephant conflicts, the majority of the elephant habitats in Karnataka are facing issues with increasing human populations and encroachment of wildlife habitats. Reserves like Kali, Bhadra, and the habitats in the Mysuru plateau experience forest fragmentation challenges due to increasing human footprint.

Nagarhole, Bandipur, BRT Hills forests threatened by invasive species, forest fires, and pressure from upcoming developmental projects

Apart from human-elephant conflicts, the majority of the elephant habitats in Karnataka are facing issues with increasing human populations and encroachment of wildlife habitats

Large numbers of cattle population, which occupy the majority of prime locations, increase the resource competition as well as increase the threat of spreading diseases. Developmental projects, especially the linear infrastructure projects, pose another major challenge in the landscape and have caused numerous elephant mortalities.

The census underlines that the contiguous forests of the Nagarhole, Bandipur, and BRT Hills face the threat of the spread of invasive species, frequent forest fires, and also face increasing pressure from upcoming developmental projects. Additionally, plantations of Acacia and Eucalyptus, along with the spread of invasive alien species like Lantana, Senna, and Chromolaena, have affected the vegetation of the area.

The elephant population of Kali Tiger Reserve occasionally ventures into Sirsi, Belagavi, Haliyal, Yellapura, and Dharwad Forest Divisions. While evergreen forests form most of the natural vegetation in the landscape, two-thirds of the land cover at the landscape level is occupied by human settlement and cultivation. The expanding human population has fragmented the natural habitats in this region.

"The once-contiguous elephant population in the Western Ghats is rapidly disconnecting due to changing land use, including expanding commercial plantations such as coffee and tea, invasive plants, farmland fencing, human encroachment, and mushrooming developmental projects," the report has noted.

Shakti has expanded footprint of BMTC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the tremendous socio-economic impact on women and their families.

The survey was conducted with respondents who received two or more of the five guarantees. The average scheme saturation amongst women beneficiaries was highest in Shakti with 96%, followed by Anna Bhagya at 94%, Gruha Jyoti with 82%, Gruha Lakshmi at 78% and Yuva Nidhi with 7%. "I have observed people of all age groups using Shakti. In particular, women working in garment factories and female students use it the most. Elderly individuals use this scheme to visit their children's homes," said a bus Conductor from Tumakuru.

The biggest impact is to women's own healthcare, with over 80% of beneficiaries reporting increased access to doctors, clinics, hospitals, and medicines across all the districts surveyed.

According to the survey, this was because women were able to visit their children in hostels more frequently and meet their maternal family members without having to ask their husbands to sponsor travel and expenses. Elderly women were able to visit their married children without being dependent on sponsorship.

An average of 19% lower-income women across the state report getting a new job or switching to a better-paying job due to zero-ticket travel. Shakti is a tour de force for lower-income women's employment and income boost. In Bengaluru Urban district, 34% reported new or better jobs, with 26% having acquired new jobs. This raises their earned income. Nearly two thirds of women in the city commute to work daily, using zero-ticket rides.

Krishnaswamy said, "The Shakti scheme was envisaged for enhancing women's mobility and self-reliance. Women from low-income backgrounds not only attest to increased agency for mobility, it has enabled significant increase in access to healthcare and employment. More than anything, lack of affordable mobility has been a barrier to women's lives until Shakti came along."

It has also boosted women's agency for mobility, their family relationships, self-confidence, self-reliance and empowerment.

Shakti has also expanded the footprint of BMTC, with 12% of respondents admitting being brand new passengers, who have never used a bus until the launch of Shakti. Similarly, 15% admitted to being brand new users, post Shakti, in Bengaluru Rural.

Learnings shared with govt

Recommendations were made to the government, stating that with 19% of respondents across the state acquiring brand new jobs or better-paying jobs, Shaki has a quantifiable, significant footprint in enabling employment and earnings of women beneficiaries. It can deliver a bigger boost with some improvements, which could also lead to better employment and earnings of women and men, and further increase the social benefits to women. It was suggested to increase the number of buses, frequency and rationalise routes.

As many as 85% women head of households have complained about access due to distance of bus stops and delays due to overcrowding. More buses, bus-stops and route rationalisation would boost outcomes further, it was recommended.

The actions suggested to the government were to rebrand Shakti scheme as a sustainable policy initiative that promotes gender-equitable public participation and employment, highlighting the economic savings it brings to entire families, not just women. There was a suggestion to emphasise how free mobility for women eases the financial burden on household budgets, indirectly benefiting men and overall family welfare and quantify and publicise the broader impact of Shakti on Bengaluru's transport efficiency, reduced congestion, cleaner air, improved productivity, and the resulting economic boost for the city.

The study included a quantitative, random, door-to-door survey across 15 districts, covering over 6,000 women and qualitative research with focus group discussions and ecosystem stakeholder conversations with those involved in its delivery.

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Women-led gang spins 1% interest web to trap victims

Police bust group led by con woman that dupes women with fake chit funds, promising easy loans, collecting advance EMIs, then disappearing without trace

Atiya Firdos
c-syeda.atiya@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

Official says citizens should not trust any scheme that demands advance payment before loan disbursal

IN FOCUS
LOAN TRAP

Officials urge public to verify registration details and legitimacy of any loan or chit fund agency before making payments

A women-led gang accused of cheating several women across Bengaluru through a fake low-interest loan scheme has been arrested by the police. The gang allegedly posed as representatives of a chit fund company, offering loans at an interest rate of just Rs 1 to lure victims. They collected advance EMIs and service charges before disappearing without disbursing any loans.

According to officials, the gang introduced themselves as staff of a firm named 'Subbalakshmi Chit Fund' and approached women in residential areas, promising quick loans ranging from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 15 lakh. Victims were asked to pay three months' EMIs in advance, about Rs 30,000, along with a Rs 5,000 service fee. After collecting the money, the accused switched off their phones and vanished. Police said at least sixteen women in KP Agrahara and one in Basaveshwaranagar had been duped, with more victims likely to come forward.

The prime accused, Nayana DR, was found to be running the fake loan racket under the name Subbalakshmi Chits Private Limited. Along with her associates, she reportedly cheated over fifteen people, mostly from poor and middle-class backgrounds, collecting around Rs 12.22 lakh in total. They also issued fake promissory notes to make the scheme appear genuine.

A senior police official said that the racket had been operating for over two to three months before the victims realised they were cheated. "The accused, Nayana, had been previously booked in similar cases in Basaveshwaranagar and Annapoorneshwari Nagar and is currently in judicial custody. We are continuing investigations to identify more victims and possible accomplices," the official said.

Police investigations revealed that the accused, all women, approached victims from lower and middle-income backgrounds, particularly homemakers and small business owners in need of quick loans.

One of the prime suspects had allegedly posed as a link to a reputed chit fund company, assuring victims that she could help them get loans through her 'relative' working inside the firm. Believing the claim, several women trusted the offer and transferred advance payments. Police said the accused collected amounts ranging between Rs 30,000 and Rs 35,000 from each victim before absconding.

A senior police officer said, "These con artists exploit women seeking small business loans or urgent financial help. Their offers sound believable, especially when backed by names resembling known chit funds." The official said that citizens should not trust any scheme that demands advance payment before loan disbursal.

Officials have urged the public to verify the registration details and legitimacy of loan agencies before making payments.

IN HIGH COURT

State Emblem petition: 'No merit in allegations'

The Karnataka High Court on Thursday dismissed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) that sought directions to the state government to review and correct the design of the Karnataka State Emblem, alleging non-compliance with the State Emblem of India (Prohibition of Improper Use) Act, 2005.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice CM Poonacha dismissed the petition filed by Gnaneshwara M, who had argued that the state emblem was not being used in accordance with the statutory specifications laid out in the 2005 Act.

The petitioner contended that the inscription "Satyameva Jayate" was not placed in its "correct statutory position" in the Karnataka State Emblem, as prescribed in Appendix I and II of the Act. He also claimed that the emblem used on the Home Guards' uniform cap badge deviated from the legally mandated design.

Further, the petitioner urged the court to direct the State to establish a permanent monitoring committee to oversee the appropriate use of the emblem across all government departments, agencies, and official documents.

However, after examining the submissions and records, the bench found no merit in the allegations. The bench clarified that the usage of the Karnataka State Emblem, as currently adopted, does not violate these provisions.

The High Court effectively closed the matter, stating that there was no basis to intervene in the State's existing use of the emblem or to direct the formation of a new monitoring body. **–BMB**

Cops slammed over defective chargesheets

The Karnataka High Court on Thursday strongly criticised police officials for filing defective chargesheets in election-related offences, particularly in cases involving prominent political figures. The court said such conduct creates a "facade" of legal compliance while undermining the seriousness of election offences.

Justice S Sunil Dutt Yadav observed that offences connected to elections are governed by a specific legal framework and must be handled with the gravity they deserve.

The court further remarked that some officials may deliberately file flawed chargesheets to allow courts to quash them, thereby giving the impression of having followed the law without any real accountability. "Such an attitude of officials is required to be frowned upon," the judge said.

The observation came while hearing a plea by former BJP MP Prathap Simha seeking to quash an FIR filed against him in 2023 under Section 171H of the Indian Penal Code, which deals with illegal payments and failure to maintain election accounts.

According to the complaint, on April 23, 2023, BJP workers held a bike rally in Mysuru. Simha, then a Member of Parliament, was travelling along with the Chairman of Mysuru Urban Development Authority and allegedly addressed voters. When questioned by a flying squad official about permission for the rally, there was no response, leading to filing of an FIR and chargesheet under Section 171H. The court, however, found that the allegations did not meet the requirements of Section 171H. Instead, they pointed to Section 188 of the IPC, which pertains to disobedience of an order by a public servant.

Finding no basis to continue the proceedings, the High Court set aside the chargesheet and allowed the petition. **–BMB**

IN BRIEF

Police helps lost senior get home

In a heartwarming act, a Hoysala patrolling team from Begur helped reunite a 78-year-old woman who had lost her way home after wandering the streets for several hours on Wednesday night. Responding promptly to a call about the woman, the Hoysala team reached the spot and after nearly an hour of searching, traced her family to an apartment in New Mico Layout, Hongasandra, where the family and several residents had been frantically looking for her. **–BMB**

Officials caught accepting bribes

The Lokayukta officials in Tumakuru district on Thursday caught the Secretary and Bill Collector of Thovinkere Gram Panchayat in Koratagere taluk red-handed while accepting a bribe from a local businessman in exchange for issuing digital property ownership certificate. Acting on the complaint, Lokayukta teams laid a trap and apprehended the accused, identified as Secretary Suma and her assistant Maruthi, in the act of accepting the payment. Both have been booked and taken into custody. **–BMB**

Student found murdered

A 20-year-old B Pharm student was found brutally murdered near the railway tracks behind Mantri Mall in Malleshwaram on Thursday afternoon. The victim, identified as Yamini Priya, a resident of Srirampura, was reportedly returning home after attending her college exam when she was stabbed. The incident came to light when passersby noticed the young woman lying in a pool of blood and immediately alerted the police. Further investigations are underway. **–BMB**

SOCIALTATTLE

Kiran Kumar S
@KiranKS
Follow
This picture is at least fifty years old. Maybe more.
See how nicely they maintained Bengaluru roads then?
No garbage.
No potholes.
10:12 am · 16 Oct 25 · 32.9K Views

IMAGE OF THE DAY

A photo of the Town Hall junction in Bengaluru, believed to be at least fifty years old, was shared by @KiranKS and has gone viral amid ongoing debates about the city's bad roads and traffic. It was noted in the post how well city roads were maintained back then, with no garbage and potholes.

Yash
@i_am_yash_2112
Follow
Another day another fight on the roads of Bengaluru ORR today.
Yesterday just for a minute i found a little space on the road and this gentleman showed me a lil hope (hearts) so i mixed it with a song to show my love for Bengaluru.

WHAT'S TWEETING

A video was shared by @i_am_yash_2112 showing a man carrying heart-shaped balloons, captioned that another fight occurred on Bengaluru's ORR today, and that yesterday, a little space was found on the road for a minute, which gave a glimpse of hope that was mixed with a song to express love for B'luru.

A passenger advisory was issued by @BLRAirport, encouraging passengers to arrive early to allow sufficient time for travel formalities. Flight-related information was advised to be obtained from respective airlines. Passengers were thanked for their patience and understanding.

BLR Airport @BLRAirport · 7h
Passenger advisory from BLR Airport:
Passengers are encouraged to arrive early to allow sufficient time for travel formalities.
For flight related information please stay in touch with your respective Airlines.
We thank you for your patience and understanding.
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PASSENGER ADVISORY
16 October, 2025

BM TAGGED

The story on 'Namma Metro tapping ads to boost revenue streams' was tagged by the user @raghumanchen, stating that passengers' ability to view the crowd inside the coach and switch between coaches, which are free, is blocked by ads, and that doors should be kept clear of advertisements.

Raghu M
@raghumanchen
Follow
@OfficialBMRCL Ads block a passenger's ability to view the crowd inside coach and switch between coaches, which are free. Keep doors clear of ads.
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Southwest monsoon bids adieu, northeast monsoon sets in over B'luru

After several days of bright sunshine, Bengaluru witnessed cloudy weather on Thursday as the southwest monsoon officially retreated, paving the way for the onset of the northeast monsoon. October 15 typically marks the transition phase.

According to Namma Karnataka Weather updates on X platform, "It was a windy start to the day with clouds sweeping in from the east. The northeast monsoon (NEM) is here quite early this year. The city can expect a partially cloudy day with light passing showers ranging between 3mm to 20mm." The weather portal added that a developing upper air circulation near the Comorin region is expected to move northwest, positively influencing rainfall across South Interior Karnataka till October 20. However, it warned that a possible system forming in the last week of October could bypass southern peninsular regions, limiting further rain prospects.

Dr N Puviarasan, Scientist 'F' and Head of the Meteorological Centre, Bengaluru, confirmed that the city will experience a generally cloudy sky with chances of light to moderate rain or thundershowers in the coming days. "Maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be around 27°C and 21°C respectively," he said. **—BMB**

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I, Rajashekar .M S/o M.Muniramu, residing at No.27/4, Shivaramakaranth Road, Chikkalasandra, Subramanyapura, Bangalore-560061, stating that, i have lost the original copy of the registered Gift Deed for Site No. 19. The property assessment No.27/4, Khata No.43, Site No.19, Chikkalasandra of BBMP jurisdiction, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, **Bounded:** East to West 21.6 feet and North to South, East side: 59-9 feet and West side: 59-6 feet, total area 1281 sq. ft. The said Gift Deed of Site No.19 (Registered as document No.BSK-1-00760-2020-21, Book 1, CD No.BSKD820 dated 09.06.2020) was lost at Chikkalasandra on 13.10.2025. In this regard, i have filed a complaint (L.R. No. 1851359/2025) to the Bangalore City Police on 14.10.2025. If anyone finds the said document, please Contact the above Address or **Mobile Number 9110876123**

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Gaganashree Ramesh D/o Ramesh Reddy Ramareddy R/o No 19, Papaiah Layout, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, B'luru-560098 have changed my name to Gaganashree Ramesh Reddy.

I, Gaurav Rakesh Sahay S/o Rakesh Sahay R/o D 1103, Shriram Suhana, OPP BMSIT college, Harohalli, Yelahanka, Bangalore-560064 have changed my name to Gaurav Sahay for all purposes.

I IMTHIYAZ R/O No 17 AMANULLA MANZIL 1st MAIN GANGANAGAR RT NAGAR PO BENGALURU-560032. have changed my name to IMTHIYAZ AHMED

I, Shivanna B R/O 311/8, bahubali Nagar, jalahalli, banglore,560013. Have changed my name Shivanna S to Shivanna B for all the future purposes

I, Babu S/o, Mahaboob Sab R/o Shikari Palya Hulimangala Post Bangluru 560105 have changed my name to Mohammed Babu for all purposes.

I, SAYED AFSAR PASHA, R/a.#38, Modi Rd,4th Cross, Joseph Garden, DJ Halli, Bengaluru-45. I, have Changed my name to SYED AFSAR PASHA, Vide affidavit, dated 15/10/2025 Sworn before Notary Meer Hassan Bangalore

I, SUSHAANTH KUTTUA S/O UTHAYAKUMAR C KUTTUA R/O GUNJUR VILLAGE BENGALURU KARNATAKA 560087, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM IS SUSHAANTH UTHAYAKUMAR KUTTUA TO SUSHAANTH KUTTUA FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

I Sadiq Pasha (j0768608) S/O, Ameer Jan R/o F-102 Emerald Apartment 4th Cross Gandhinagar Nr Ym Public School Kg Halli Ac Post Bangalore 560045 have changed my name to Syed Sadiq Pasha S/o Syed Ameer Jan.

I, KULADEEP KUMAR G (Old Name) S/o Gajula Ramamohan residing at H.No.33, JP House, 1st Floor, 1st Main, 5th Cross, Thayappa Garden, Bilekahalli, Bengaluru - 560076, changed my name from KULADEEP KUMAR G to GAJULA KULADEEP KUMAR vide Affidavit dated 15.10.2025 before Notary R.J. SOLANKI.

I, Rakesh Brijnandan Sahay S/o B. N. Sahay R/o 7601, Prestige apartment, Dodaballapura road, Ramanashree resort, Puttenahalli, Yelahanka, Bangalore-560064 have changed my name to Rakesh Sahay for all purposes.

I, JOSHITA P D, Hereby declare that my father's name as per my Aadhar Card and Pan card is Y PAKIANATHAN DEEPAK which is correct as per my father's documents too. and my father's name as per my Educational records is PAKIANATHAN DEEPAK which does not include the initial "Y". This Affidavit is declared before Notary B M Chandrashekar.

GALLERIA

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SINGAPORE MALAYSIA/THAILAND* 7/11* DAYS	DEC: 4 JAN: JAN: 8, 22 FEB: 5, 19
BANGKOK PATTAYA 5 DAYS	DEC: 11, JAN: 14, 28
DUBAI 5 DAYS	NOV: 4, DEC: 2, JAN: 6, 20
ANDAMAN 6 DAYS	NOV: 12, 26
BHUTAN 8 DAYS	OCT: 24 NOV: 18
VIETNAM 8 DAYS	OCT: 25 NOV: 16
SRI LANKA 7 DAYS	NOV: 15, 29
NEPAL WITH MUKTINATH 8 DAYS	NOV: 4
BALI 7 DAYS	DEC: 6

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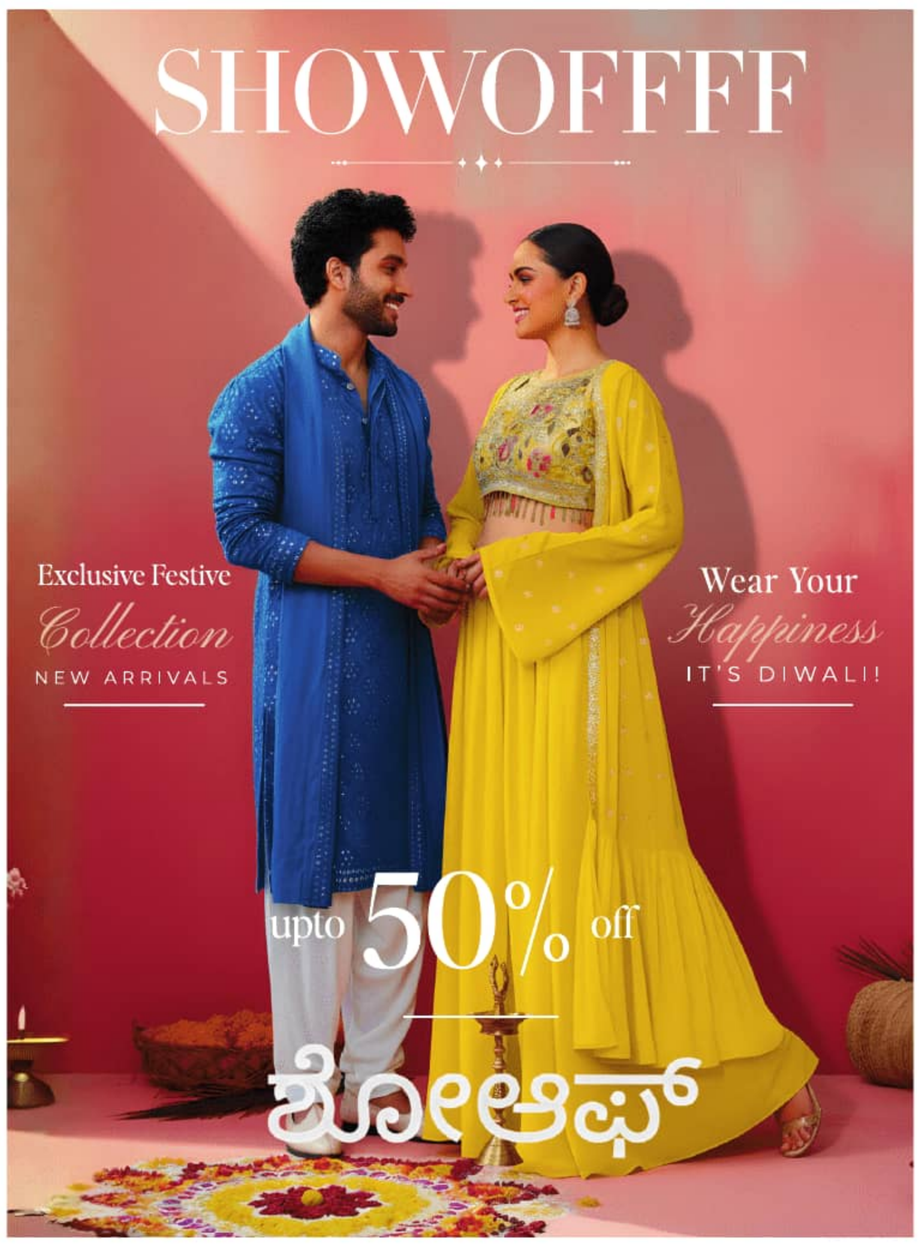


Diane Keaton died of pneumonia— Actor Diane Keaton died of pneumonia, her family has revealed, expressing gratitude for the outpouring of love they received following her death last week

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Patashala on Nov 14

Patashala that is set to arrive in theaters on November 14 deals with various issues including the need to preserve the environment. "The movie's title is Patashala (school) but it covers a wider range of themes. The movie revolves around the bonding between teachers and students. The present method of education is different from the 1980s. There is a big gap between the teachers and the students. There is also a strand about

the rampant encroachment of forest land," said director Manjunath Shetty.

The director said the movie was shot for 20 days in and around Thirthahalli in Shivamogga. The producer is from Thirthahalli. The movie has a tagline - Odu Illa Odogu (study or runaway).

Akshay said that he was happy to be part of the team. "I play Naveen, a bicycle mechanic. I thank the director and producer for giving me this opportunity," he said.

Veteran director-cum-actor Sudhakar Bannanje plays a headmaster in the movie. "The movie has turned out well. It highlights the importance of the much-needed bond between teachers and students. The movie aims to convey a message to the society on the importance of value-based education," he said.

The movie features child artistes Diganth, Mithun, Ayush, Sriyaan, Ahana, and Gowthami.

Song of love

The song of bilingual movie Jai was unveiled in a unique way. The love song - Love U - was unveiled by a few couples. Jai is being made in Tulu and Kannada. Roopesh Shetty of Bigg Boss fame play the lead in the movie while Advithi Shetty is paired opposite him.

"I am happy to see all the guests gracing the event. My ambition was to invite role model couples for love to unveil this love song. I want to thank all the guests," said Shetty.

It is said that Shetty is also directing the film. Shetty is said to have tried to ensure that the song is melodious. The music director is said to have composed five tunes for the song but the sixth one

got approval from the director. There was a hunt for a suitable playback singer and the director finally zeroed in on Rajat Hegde. The Tulu version of the song was written by Shetty in a single day. The Kannada version was written by Keerthan Bhandari.

Advithi Shetty debuts in Tulu language with this movie. She plays a journalist in the movie that is bankrolled by Anil Shetty, Sudhakar Shetty Mugrodi, and Manjunath Atthavar under the RS Cinemas, Shoolin Films, and Mugrodi Productions banners.

I still have a scar: Channing was injured while doing nude scene

Channing Tatum recently shared that he got injured while filming a "nude scene" for his latest movie, 'Roofman.' The actor, who plays fugitive Jeffrey Manchester in the film, said the scene left him with a permanent scar.

According to Deadline, Tatum, in a recent interview with a magazine, recalled how the accident happened while shooting one of the film's most challenging and awkward moments.

"I mean, it wasn't great, because I'm butt naked, so I can't wear pads or anything," Tatum told the magazine, as per Deadline. "So I was wet and soapy, and it was just a messy scene."

In the sequence, Jeffrey is caught showering inside a Toys 'R' Us by store manager Mitch, played by Peter Dinklage. The scene quickly turns chaotic as the nude fugitive tries to flee through the store, tripping over things before climbing up a wall to hide.

"I did actually get hurt jumping up onto the bike rack, and then I had to do the funny jump into my little hideaway," he recalled. "I didn't make it over the edge of the hideaway, and I gashed my [leg]. I still have a scar from it on my leg, and we just had to glue it together and keep going."

The actor also recalled how awkward it was to film such a scene, especially with the camera placement.

"I think the most memorable thing, though, is looking at Derek [Cianfrance, the director] and going, 'How are we shooting this? Because at any angle, you're going to see stuff.' And he's like, 'Yeah, we're going to figure it out.' And I'm like, 'What does "figure it out" mean? Because you're right behind me as I'm jumping up on the thing. You're going to be right down the barrel,'" he added.

—ANI

Distant relative

Priyamani and Vidya Balan are cousins who are not much in touch

Did you know 'Chennai Express' fame actress Priyamani has a cousin in Bollywood? She and Vidya Balan are actually second cousins, yes, their grandfathers were brothers! However, despite this family connection, the actresses are not very close.

Talking to News18 Showsha, Priyamani opened up about how their connection works. She said, "We have never been on talking terms in that way even though we are related. However, I speak more to her father. Balan uncle is on a regular talking basis with me and when he can't get through to me, he calls up my father and they chat up. Vidya Balan is a phenomenal actor, the mutual admiration is always there. I can't wait for her to come back on screen. As an audience member, I am really missing the powerful actor that she is."

Looking ahead, Priyamani is set to start shooting for 'The Family Man' Season 3 alongside Manoj Bajpayee. The popular series, created by Raj and DK, has a loyal fan following. Priyamani plays Suchitra, a key character in the series, and fans are eagerly waiting to see her back on screen.

In another chat with India Today, talking about her co-star Manoj Bajpayee, Priyamani described him as "extremely spontaneous."

She added, "He still surprises me every single time he comes on set. Be it any scene we do, even after all these years, he'll always bring something unexpected!"

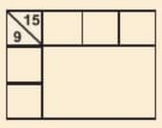
—ETimes

BM RETAIL & SHOPPING

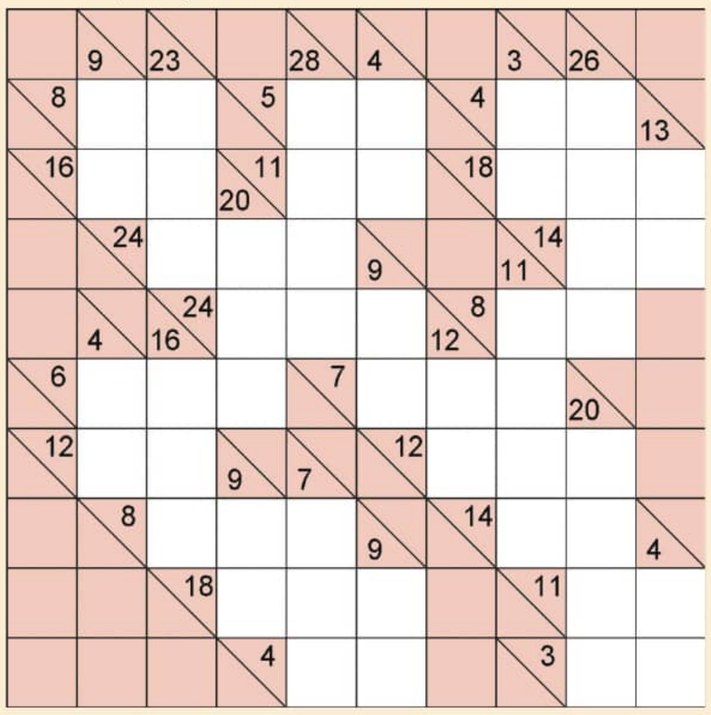
BM Food & Night Life

Kakuro

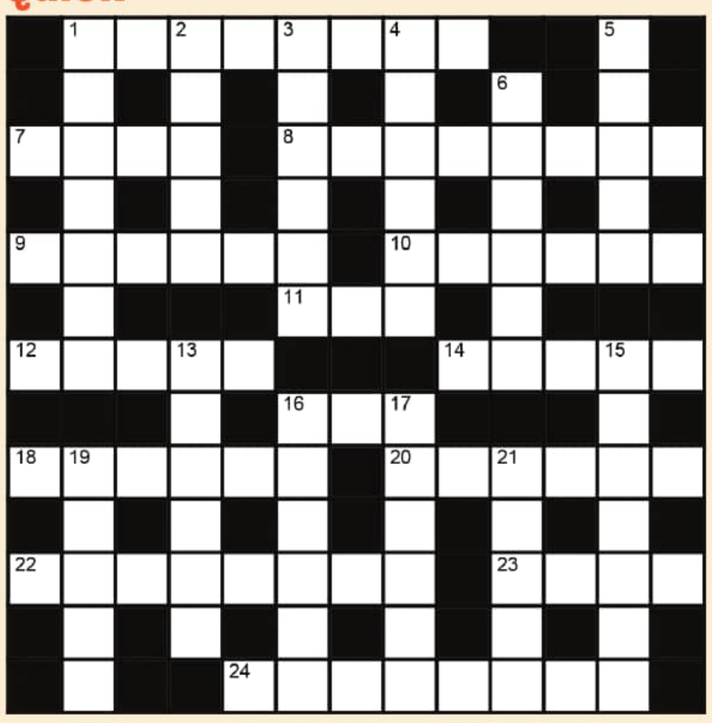
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 US city known for its casinos (3,5)
7 FBI agent (slang) (1-3)
8 Slingshot (8)
9 Took a little drink? (6)
10 Sculpted or engraved (6)
11 Sturdy tree (3)
12 Intermediate place (5)
14 Bone prefix (5)
16 Choose (3)
18 Increase; arrive (4,2)
20 Strolled (6)
22 Hooded wicker cradle or pram (8)
23 Eight as a prefix (4)
24 Someone devoted to human welfare (2-6)

DOWN

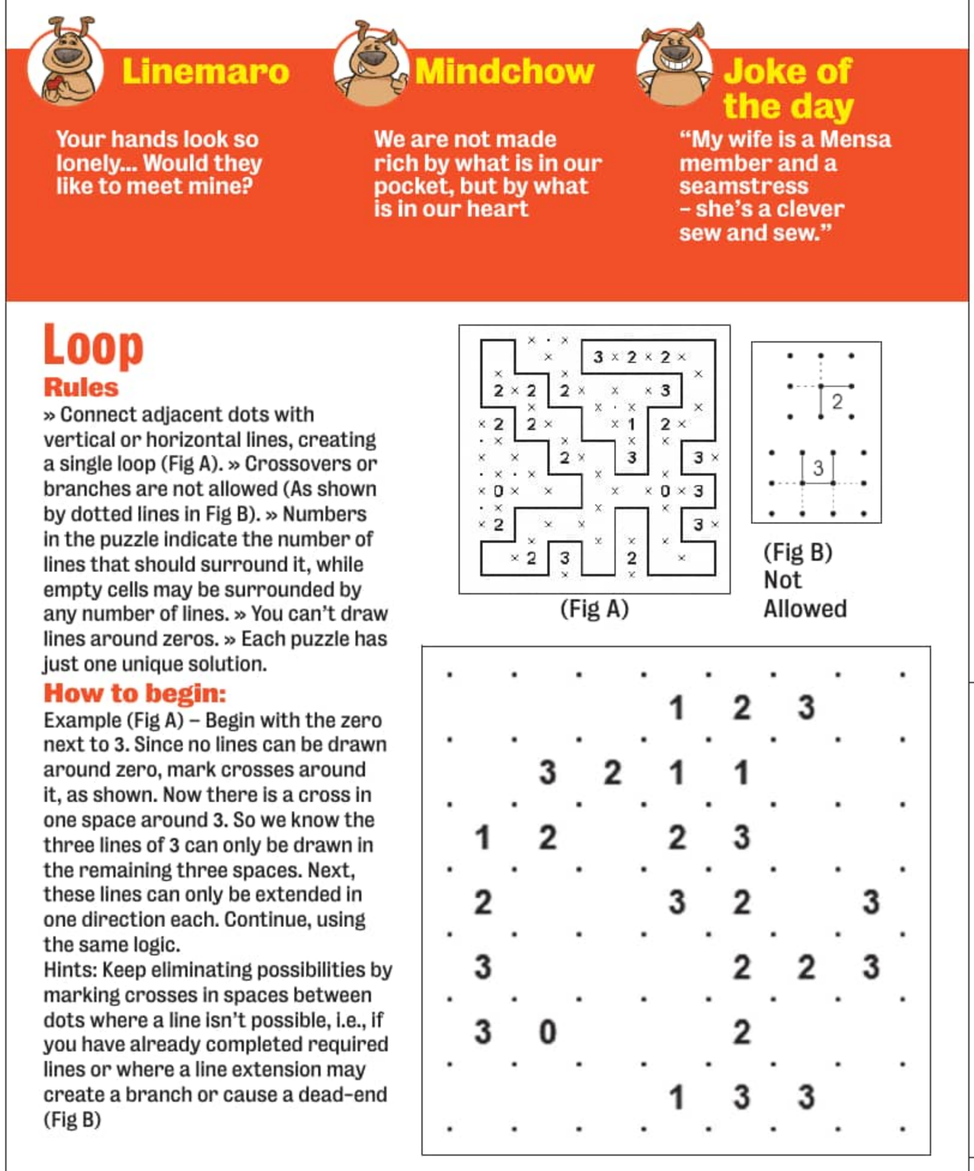
1 ___ Garden: Boating Park on Nagwara lake (7)
2 Dawn (3-2)
3 Portuguese money formerly (6)
4 Go on the offensive (6)
5 Protrude outwards (5)
6 Pardons (6)
13 Cast out, dispel or expatriate (6)
15 Voter (7)
16 Receptive (to an idea) (4,2)
17 Body decoration (6)
19 Employment (5)
21 Hatchlings (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: B EQUALS G

NYQBOXB ZSUP CWR PKOX VUSCOUXF UZ CWR WOFCUSH UZ CWR JUSMQ, FU ZKS, NYFCODR OF KMJKHF OX NRUVKSQH.



Linemaro

Your hands look so lonely... Would they like to meet mine?

Mindchow

We are not made rich by what is in our pocket, but by what is in our heart

Joke of the day

"My wife is a Mensa member and a seamstress – she's a clever sew and sew."

Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

How to begin:

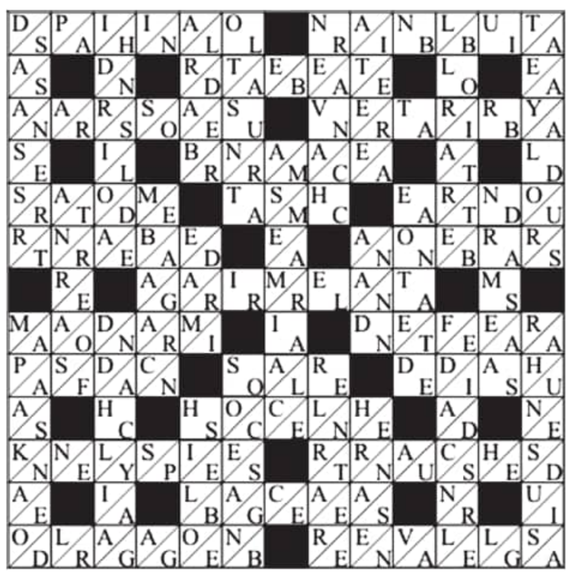
Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)

(Fig A)

(Fig B) Not Allowed

Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9		K		

ACROSS

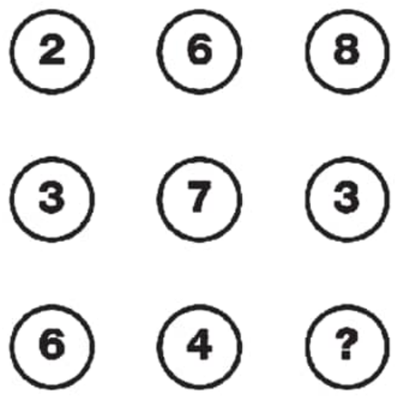
1 Cap as; 6 Al Gem; 7 Ree Nu; 8 Idler; 9 OK Ess

DOWN

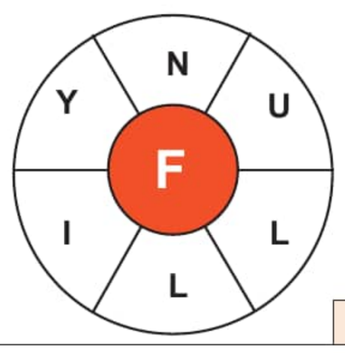
1 Prise; 2 Amino; 3 A luck; 4 Eager; 5 See SD

Mensapuzzle

What is missing from the last circle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; **05** Good; **06** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

			1		9			
9	7						3	2
6			3		7			5
8		3		5		2		4
		1				9		
7		9		3		6		8
3			4		2			1
1	2						4	7
			7		5			

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 13

2 3 4 4

Medium = 17

3 3 5 5

Hard = 8

1 5 7 8

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Boy is moved. 2. Hair is different. 3. Stripe is added to sleeve. 4. Fence board is missing. 5. Baseball mitt is not showing. 6. Mouth is different.

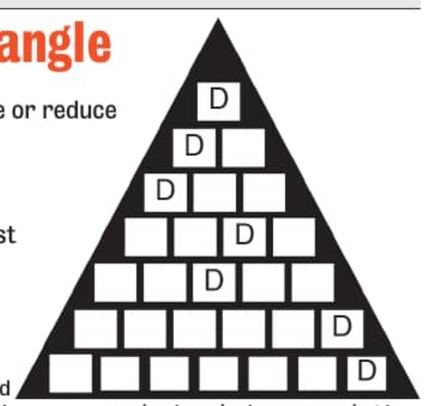
Riddler

A spoonerism is a pair of words that can have their initial sounds switched to form new words. The pairs need only sound the same, not necessarily be spelled the same. Given the following definitions, what are the spoonerisms?

1) arsonist's desire & to battle a fibber
2) underground amphibian & bar rules

Alpha triangle

1 Five hundred
2 Prefix for remove or reduce
3 Owed
4 Uncouth
5 Beneath
6 Wrecked
7 Not put to the test

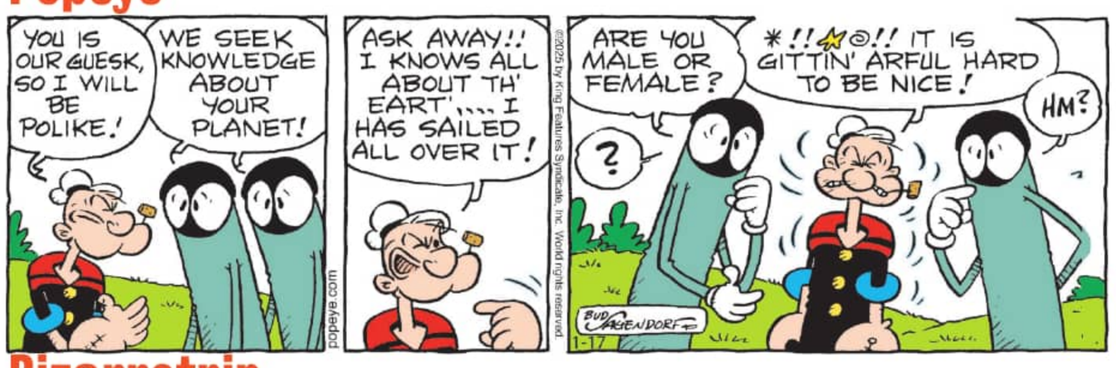


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye


YOU IS OUR GUESK, SO I WILL BE POLIKE!
WE SEEK KNOWLEDGE ABOUT YOUR PLANET!
ASK AWAY!! I KNOWS ALL ABOUT TH' EART'.... I HAS SAILED ALL OVER IT!
ARE YOU MALE OR FEMALE?
*!!@!! IT IS GITTIN' ARFUL HARD TO BE NICE!
HM?
?
BUD SAGENDORF
popeye.com
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1-17

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

DAD, CAN YOU TAKE US TO A SPLASH PAD?
SURE, DEAN. WHICH ONE?
WHY JUST ONE? THERE'S 94 TO CHOOSE FROM!
ALRIGHT, BUT YOU GUYS ARE PAYING FOR GAS.
DAD!
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@COMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

DO YOU KNOW WHO THAT CARTOON CHARACTER IS?
NO... I'M AFRAID I'M DRAWING A MEL BLANC!
7-9
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BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts

OH, HARLEY, I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THIS DOGGY DAY CAMP— I MISS MY OZZIE!
SIGH.
FORGET ABOUT IT, EARL—THERE ARE SO MANY ACTIVITIES TO KEEP YOU OCCUPIED!
Hmm...
CAN I MAKE MY OZZIE A POT HOLDER?
mutts.com
www.kingfeatures.com
7-9

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Transformation shapes your year, as change sparks renewal. Career growth comes through bold choices. Relationships deepen when you share vulnerability. Finances require wise planning, but gains arrive steadily. Creative outlets inspire confidence and healing. Health benefits from mindful practises. By year's end, you'll feel empowered. Exciting new beginnings lie ahead.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

Love approaches today. At social events, mutual attraction ignites. Enjoy this fresh connection; trust the shared interest. This romance begins naturally, o ering warmth, excitement, and companionship.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

Romance may stall. Transparency nurtures trust. If truth feels concealed, reconsider compatibility. Honest communication determines whether love strengthens or redirects toward healthier alignment.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

Ignite sparks through conversation. Initiate dialogue—even lighthearted exchanges count. Communication builds bridges, keeps energy flowing, and draws interest, making connections stronger and more promising.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Prioritise yourself today. Relish your independence without guilt. Happiness doesn't require a partnership. Celebrate your freedom, nurture personal joy, and embrace completeness.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Ego challenges love. Both strong personalities can clash. Step back gracefully, allowing harmony. Choosing peace over pride strengthens your relationship and proves love outweighs unnecessary dominance.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

Release toxic ties quickly. If romance feels wrong, waiting won't help. Honour your instincts, detach firmly, and create space for healthier energy to enter your life.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

Your radiant energy glows. Positivity draws people naturally. Welcome admiration, avoid pushing others away, and revel in attention. A centre-stage presence today enhances bonds while spreading joyful vibes.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

Stress signals rest. Take a solo retreat, a nap, a day o , or a personal trip. Alone time renews your spirit, restores balance, and clears your mind, inviting peace and renewed energy.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

Happiness surrounds you. Positive energy fuels joy. Break your routine with fresh activities alongside loved ones. Fun experiences expand horizons, uplift mood, and strengthen bonds effortlessly.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

Overloaded thoughts need calm. Meditation soothes restlessness, quiets the mind, and restores harmony. Inner focus grants serenity and balance, easing stress.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

Hydrate, eat fresh, stay lightly active. Meditation restores balance. Avoid overthinking; positivity and simple routines heal quickly, strengthening both body and mind today.

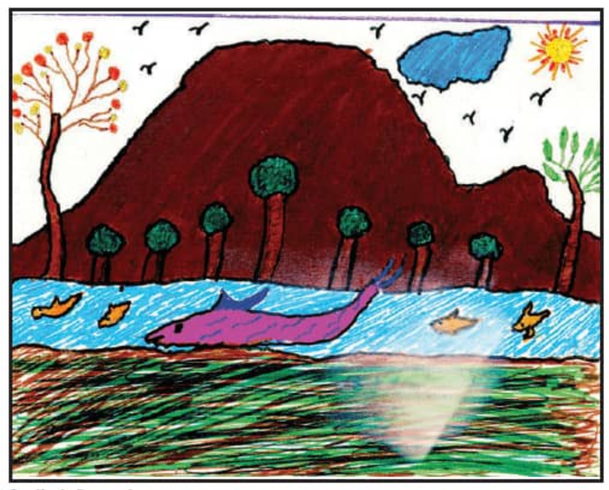
Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Overreactions cloud clarity. Don't cancel plans. Stick with them; uncertainty fades naturally. Action dissolves doubt, reveals perspective, and aligns experiences positively.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE

Abhinava, Bengaluru



Sadhvi, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

$= [(\sqrt{8})^2 + 2(\sqrt{8})(\sqrt{2}) + (\sqrt{2})^2]/[(\sqrt{24})^2 - 2(\sqrt{24})(\sqrt{6}) + (\sqrt{6})^2]$
$= [8 + 2\sqrt{16} + 2]/[24 - 2\sqrt{144} + 6]$
$= [8 + 8 + 2]/[24 - 24 + 6]$
$= [8 + 8 + 2]/[24 - 2(12) + 6]$
$= 18/6 = 3$

BULL'S EYE UNCODE

FILL, FILLY, FULL, FULLY, UNFLY

Judging from the main portions of the history of the world, so far, justice is always in jeopardy.

FAST FIVE

P	A	C	A	S
I	M	A	G	E
E	N	U	R	E
R	I	L	E	D
S	O	K	E	S

STRIKE OUT

S	P	I	N	A	L	■	R	A	B	I	T
A	■	N	■	R	A	B	A	T	■	O	A
N	A	S	S	A	U	■	N	E	A	R	B	Y
E	■	I	■	B	R	A	C	E	■	A	■	L
S	A	D	E	■	A	S	H	■	A	T	N	O
T	R	E	A	D	■	A	■	A	N	E	A	R
■	E	■	G	A	R	M	E	N	T	■	M	■
M	A	D	A	M	■	I	■	D	E	F	E	R
A	S	A	N	■	O	L	E	■	D	I	S	H
K	E	L	P	I	E	■	T	R	A	C	E	S
S	■	H	■	S	C	E	N	E	■	A	■	E
E	■	I	■	L	A	C	E	S	■	R	■	U
D	R	A	G	O	N	■	R	E	V	E	L	S

QUICK

■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	E
■	■	■	D	O	G	O	O	D	E	R
■	■	■	■	■	T	■	■	■	■	G
■	■	■	■	■	O	■	■	■	■	O
B	A	S	S	I	N	E	T	■	O	C	T	A
S	■	I	■	E	T	■	R	■	C	■	■	■
T	U	R	N	U	P	■	A	M	B	L	E	D
■	■	■	A	■	O	P	T	■	■	L	■	■
L	I	M	B	O	■	O	S	T	E	O	■	■
N	■	■	■	O	A	K	■	E	■	■	■	■
S	I	P	P	E	D	■	C	A	R	V	E	D
B	■	U	■	A	■	A	■	G	■	■	■	■
G	M	A	N	■	C	A	T	A	P	U	L	T
U	■	S	■	T	■	S	■	U	■	■	■	■
L	A	S	V	E	G	A	S	■	B	■	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE

1. Read each row of 3 numbers as a 3 digit number, and add the top row value to the middle row, to give the result written in the bottom row.

RIDDLER

1) light a fire & fight a liar &
2) cavern toad & tavern code

SUDOKU

5	3	2	1	4	9	7	8	6
9	7	4	5	6	8	1	3	2
6	1	8	3	2	7	4	9	5
8	6	3	9	5	1	2	7	4
2	4	1	8	7	6	9	5	3
7	5	9	2	3	4	6	1	8
3	9	7	4	8	2	5	6	1
1	2	5	6	9	3	8	4	7
4	8	6	7	1	5	3	2	9

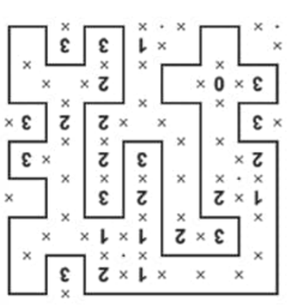
ALPHA TRIANGLE

D, DE, Due, Rude, Under, Ruined, Untried.

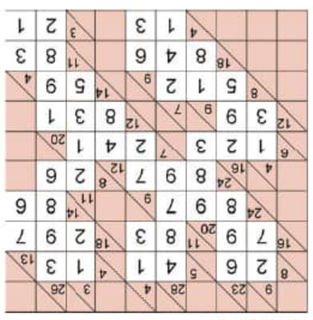
GO FIGURE

Easy
2 + 3 + 4 + 4 = 13
Medium
5 x 3 + 5 - 3 = 17
Hard
7 - 5 - 1 x 8 = 8

LOOP



KAKURO



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